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REPORT

ON

NATIVE PAPERS IN BENGAL

FOR THE

Week ending the 1st February 1902.

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I.—FOREIGN POLITICS.

The *Roznama-i-Mukaddas Hablul Mateen* [Calcutta], of the 21st January, has the following:—

The invitation of Hadda Mulla to Kabul.

The English newspapers say that the present Amir has invited Mulla Najamuddin, of Hadda, to come over to Kabul on the occasion of his coronation ceremony, which is to be held during the *Nowroz* festival. It is said that the Amir intends to keep the said Mulla at Kabul as his teacher. The Mulla, who is an inveterate enemy of the English, may set the Amir against them. It is also said that the Amir has presented the Mulla with the book on *jehad*, written by the late Amir, in order that the Mulla may preach *jehad* according to the spirit of that book among the people living on the frontier. During the last *Ramzan* the said Mulla directed those who gathered round him to hear his teachings to persuade frontier people to become subjects of the Amir. It is also said that the said Mulla deputed Sofi Burhanuddin to Tira to carry out that object. If these statements be correct, there may be another rising of the frontier tribes.

ROZNAMA-I-MUKADDAS
HABUL MATEEN,
Jan. 21st, 1902.

II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(a)—Police.

2. A correspondent writes to the *Murshidabad Hitaishi* [Murshidabad], of the 22nd January, to say that the chaukidars often compel poor people to part with their bundles of wood either for nothing or on inadequate payment, on pain of being hauled up under Act V. The daroga knows all this; but not only does he not stop the practice, but encourages it. During the last fifteen years, the correspondent has seen several darogas in succession; but all seem alike in this respect. Then again, when the Collector or the Police Superintendent goes on tour, carters are impressed into work against their will and on inadequate remuneration. Can, it, then, be said that the *begar* system is out of fashion?

MURSHIDABAD
HITAISHI,
Jan. 22nd, 1902.

3. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta], of the 22nd January, has learnt from a correspondent that Raja Prabhas Chandra Ray, of Dhubri, is persecuting the Vaishnava inhabitants of some villages within his *raj*, in order to compel them to forsake the religious beliefs of the Vaishnava sect. Such religious intolerance is a serious matter, and should draw the immediate attention of the Government.

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
Jan. 22nd, 1902.

4. A big wild elephant, says the *Bankura Darpan* [Bankura], of the 23rd January, is doing mischief to the raiyats in the south of Bankura by eating up the sugarcane and *rabi* crops. Wild elephants make their appearance every year, yet nothing is done to get rid of the pest.

BANKURA
DARPAN,
Jan. 23rd, 1902.

5. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta], of the 24th January, says that tigers are causing great ravages in Kotalipara, Paschimpara, Gachapara, Unasia, Baral, Pinjari, Mathbari and other villages within the Madaripur subdivision of the Faridpur district. Men and cattle are being made their victims every day. Unarmed people find themselves helpless in the presence of these ferocious animals.

HITAVADI,
Jan. 24th, 1902.

6. The *Dacca Prakash* [Dacca], of the 26th January, says that Babu Chinta Haran Das is a naib in Tongi in the Bhowal Estate. He was sent up for trial by Babu Kali Prasanna Das, daroga of Keraniganj thana, on a charge of having forcibly taken away fish from the boat of a fisherman, named Ram Dayal Mal. The accused in his statement said that the case had been got up at the instance of the Daroga Babu, who had a grudge against him. Babu Radhika Mohan Shaha (the accused in a case for using false coin) gave evidence on the side of the defence, and deposed that the daroga had wanted money from him in connection with the false coin case, that it was at the advice of Babu Chinta Haran that he had refused to pay the daroga anything, and that was why the false case had been brought against Babu Chinta Haran at the daroga's instigation. Babu Atal Behari Maitra, the able Deputy Magistrate,

DACCA PRAKASH,
Jan. 26th, 1902.

who tried the case, saw through the daroga's tricks and let off the accused. But will the matter end here? Will not the authorities take due notice of the conduct of daroga Kali Prasanna, when allegations of bribery and corruption have been made against him on oath? We implore the District Magistrate, Mr. Rankin, to make an enquiry.

(b)—*Working of the Courts.*

MEDINI BANDHAV,
Jan. 22nd, 1902.

7. The *Medini Bandhav* [Midnapore], of the 22nd January, writes as follows:—

Mr. Luson as Magistrate of Midnapore.

It is a very fortunate circumstance for a district with so many wants and grievances as

Midnapore, that it has got for its Magistrate an officer so just, generous and independent as Mr. Luson. Within the short time he has been here, he has given evidence of his love for the people. Under the mistaken idea that chaukidars holding *chakran* land do not work so well as paid chaukidars, Government is going to introduce Act VI of 1876 in Midnapore. But Mr. Luson, we are glad to hear, is resolved to make every effort to relieve the people of the unnecessary tax which is now proposed to be imposed upon them. He has also entitled himself to the endless gratitude of the district by relaxing the rigour with which his predecessors granted licenses for arms—a rigour, in consequence of which respectable people were insulted and heaps of confiscated guns were destroyed by fire by the police, to the prejudice of the wealth and security of the district. He has also directed his attention to the improvement of the drainage of the Contai subdivision and other places. When one observes, moreover, the calm and careful enquiry he invariably makes before ordering the sale of an estate, one cannot help regarding him as a true incarnation of justice. All these are unmistakable proofs of his love for the people.

MURSHIDABAD
HITAISHI,
Jan. 22nd, 1902.

Pressure of work in the Court of the senior Magistrate of Berhampore.

8. The *Murshidabad Hitaishi* [Murshidabad], of the 22nd January, complains of great public inconvenience on account of Mr. Mackertich, the senior Deputy Magistrate of Berhampore, being made to do too much collectorate and criminal work. Not that Mr. Mackertich is slow or lazy or late in attendance or incompetent; but it is scarcely possible for a human being to go through all this work without causing inconvenience and harassment to the public. We would request the Magistrate of the district to relieve Mr. Mackertich of a portion of his work in the interests of the public.

BASUMATI,
Jan. 23rd, 1902.

Capital sentence on wife-murderers.

9. The *Basumati* [Calcutta], of the 23rd January, says that the Hon'ble Mr. Russell, Judge of the Bombay High Court, has recently passed capital sentence on two men for wife-murder. In one case the accused, a young man of twenty-two, murdered his wife, unable to put up with her neglect any longer. In the other case the accused murdered his wife on the suspicion of her having an improper connection with his father. It is evident that none of the accused persons was incited to murder by a desire of breaking any social law, or making pecuniary gain. The ends of justice would have been fully satisfied if they had been imprisoned instead of being sentenced to death. There is no chance of the number of cases of wife-murder being reduced by the passing of capital sentence on wife-murderers. The accused persons in the above cases petitioned first the Governor of Bombay and then the Viceroy for mercy, but to no effect. Will the Government be subverted and social order upset by a reduction of the number of such cases of capital punishment?

JYOTI,
Jan. 23rd, 1902.

The officiating sharishtadarship and the permanent head clerkship in the Tippera Collectorate.

10. The *Jyoti* [Chittagong], of the 23rd January, has heard that Babu Syama Charan Mukerjee, peshkar of the Tippera Collectorate, has been appointed to officiate as sharishtadar. Now, this Babu Syama Churn, a few months ago, acted as head clerk, and perhaps because he was considered incompetent, Babu Pulin Chandra Datta, Accountant of the Darbhanga Collectorate and son-in-law of the former sharishtadar, has been appointed as permanent head clerk. But how can Babu Syama Charan be considered fit for the sharishtadarship if he was considered unfit to be head clerk? Such jobberies are, however, being perpetrated in the appointment of the *amla*, because Dacca and Faridpur people have a monopoly of employments in Government offices

in the Noakhali and Tippera districts. Will Mr. Collier, the Commissioner, make an inquiry?

11. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta], of the 23rd January, is sorry that Mr. K. M. Chatterji, the third Judge of the Calcutta Court of Small Causes, is being compelled by the Bengal Government to retire, although he still possesses strength and ability to work. *Capital* newspaper says that Government is compelling Mr. Chatterji to retire in order to provide for a newly-married Barrister, son of a Secretary to the Government of Bengal. It is hoped that such an act of injustice will not be done by Sir John Woodburn's Government. Formerly, able and conscientious Subordinate Judges used to be made Judges of the Calcutta Small Cause Court. But this has ceased to be the practice since Sir Charles Elliott's time. It seldom falls to the lot of Subordinate Judges to be appointed as District Judges or Assistant District Judges. The Small Cause Court Judgeship is, in most cases, the goal of their ambition. Government is therefore doing great injustice to them by depriving them of the Small Cause Court Judgeship.

SANJIVANI,
Jan. 23rd, 1902.

12. Referring to the Ross case, the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta], of the 24th January, writes as follows:—

HITAVADI
Jan. 24th, 1902.

The Ross case.

It is a wonder that the Honourable Judges of the High Court, who tried the case, could be swayed by the argument for the defence that small pay had obliged Mr. Ross to misappropriate Government money, and that the Government is to blame for that. If Mr. Ross thought that his pay was inadequate, why did he not ask for its increase? And if refused, why did he not resign his service? Is it not the business of the holder of a post to see that his salary is sufficient for him? It is a matter of great regret that the Judges were prevented by race prejudice from grasping this simple truth. Even the *Englishman* newspaper has found Government at fault in this case. It will be a happy thing, after all, if the value of the Sunderbans Commissionership is not raised as a consequence of this case. When the services of an able native can be secured at four or five hundred rupees, Government should not employ whitemen at a greater cost. But it is doubtful whether Government will be able to do its duty in this matter.

It was proved during the trial of the case that Mr. Ross's accounts had not been audited for 7 or 8 years successively. Had his accounts been audited every year he could have found no opportunity of misappropriating fifty thousand rupees belonging to Government. It is hoped that the Bengal Government will demand a satisfactory explanation of the case from the heads of the Account Department.

13. The same paper writes as follows:—

HITAVADI

Babu Amritalal Mukhopadhyaya
in the Osman Ali case.

In trying the case of Osman Ali and Kailas Kerani, Babu Amritalal Mukhopadhyaya showed a singular unwillingness to be prejudiced against the accused persons. But it is not always that he shows such large-heartedness in favour of accused persons. Once an old offender named Panchu Mandal, was accused by a town-constable, named Rameswar Sardar, of having committed theft in his house. The local head-constable reported the case in the C form. But Amrita Babu, within whose jurisdiction the case had occurred, ordered an A form. During the trial of the case, it was proved that the town-constable and the accused person were on bad terms with each other. The evidence for the prosecution was incredible. Amrita Babu however sentenced the accused person to eighteen months' rigorous imprisonment and wrote in his judgment that "eighteen months' rigorous imprisonment may not be considered too severe." The man was afterwards acquitted by Mr. Pargiter, Sessions Judge, in the exercise of his power of revision. The following is his judgment in the case:—

"No one appears on either side. After examining the record, I do not feel satisfied of the accused's guilt. The story told by the complainant's wife, that she awoke when some earth fell upon her body at night and sat up and lit a lamp with a match-box from under her pillow, and that she then saw the accused coming through the opening between the wall and the thatch, appears improbable. The striking of a match and the sudden illumination inside the house from the match and the lamp on a dark night would be quite sufficient to stop a thief at once, and it is not likely that a thief, and especially an old

offender, would be so foolish as to climb over and show his face in such circumstances.

"The only evidence in identification of the accused is the assertion of the complainant's wife and nephew that they recognized him; but where the facts alleged are improbable, I do not consider their testimony is sufficient. There is some evidence that there has been a quarrel between the complainant and the accused about the hut which the accused has built near the complainant's house, and there is nothing improbable therein. That being so, it is quite possible that the complainant, who is a town Chaukidar, should revenge himself by such a case as this against an adversary, who is so easily open to attack as an old convict, and I do not think that the good character, which the complainant is set to bear, is sufficient security that he would not abuse his power in such a very common way.

"I may point out to the Deputy Magistrate that while it is quite true that a man who has once been a thief is likely to commit fresh thefts; yet it is also quite certain that the Police and the chaukidars are apt to bring too ready accusations against old offenders, and even to accuse them unjustly, either to satisfy some grudge, or to win credit, or for some other reason: and in the latter case the accused, though innocent, knows that everything is so much against him, that he does not always attempt an energetic defence, or possibly his witnesses are won over or intimidated by the prosecution.

"I reverse the conviction and sentence and acquit the accused. He must be set at liberty.

(Sd.) "F. E. PARGITER,
" Sessions Judge.

"The 26th June 1900."

The above shows that the Sessions Judge, a European, possesses a greater knowledge of how cases are fabricated by the police and what sort of evidence is untrustworthy than Amrita Babu, a native. We hope that Amrita Babu will continue to show the leniency to accused persons which marked his conduct towards Osman Ali and Kailas Kerani.

(d)—*Education.*

14. The *Suhrid* [Noakhali], of the 23rd January, does not approve of the arrangement under which Divisional Inspectors of Text-books for schools in the Chittagong Division. Schools are entrusted with the selection of text-books for schools in their respective Divisions. The lists of text-books, prepared by the Inspector of Schools, Chittagong Division, are of an extraordinary nature, and detrimental to the welfare of students. The defects in the selection of text-books may not be very serious, so far as the middle schools are concerned; but the text-books, prescribed for the Entrance schools, will be positively harmful to students. For instance, "Sishu Siksha, Part III," or a similar book has been prescribed for the fifth or sixth class. The merits of a book, and not the name of its author, should regulate selection. "Bijnan Bodh" has been prescribed as a text-book for the eighth class; but "Parimal Patha, Part I," prescribed for the sixth class, and "Siksha Sopan" for the seventh, are easier books than Bijnan Bodh. This is a grave anomaly.

(e)—*Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.*

15. The *Dacca Gazette*, [Dacca], of the 27th January, complains that the authorities of the Tippera District Board are quite indifferent to the prayer of the people of Faridganj in Chandpur in the Tippera district for helping them in the establishment of a Charitable Dispensary in their village. The Board derives no inconsiderable income from Chandpur and its neighbourhood, but its contributions towards public purposes, such as construction of roads and tanks, aids to schools, etc., are very scanty. Faridganj has a big bazar; it is the head-quarters of a Government khas tehsildar, it has a sub-registry office and a bungalow for Government officers. Yet there is no dispensary within an area of ten miles.

DACCA GAZETTE,
Jan. 27th, 1902.

A charitable dispensary wanted
at Faridganj in the Tippera
district.

(f) - Questions affecting the land.

16. There is considerable unsettling of the public mind in the Backergunge district, says the *Bikash* [Barisal], of the 21st

Payment of landlord's fee on transfers of middleman's rights in the Backergunge district.

BIKASH,
Jan. 21st, 1902.

January, on account of a little too strict interpretation of a High Court judgment by some Judicial officers, relating to the payment of landlords' fees. These officers have held that all transfers of middleman's tenures without the payment of the landlord's fee, as provided for in the 'Tenancy Act, must be considered illegal and therefore void. Now, under a circular of the Registration Department, no landlord's fee was demanded on partial transfers of such tenures. Are such transactions to be considered void? Certainly, the parties were not to blame, for they acted according to a circular of the Registration Department. When the Lieutenant-Governor visited Backergunge during the last rains, this matter was brought to His Honour's notice; but nothing has since been heard in this connection.

17. The *Medini Bandhav* [Midnapore], of the 22nd January, says that disputes have been going on for the last three or

The zamindar-and-tenant disputes in the Midnapore district.

four years between Messrs. Robert Watson and Company and their tenants in regard to enhancement of rent by two annas for every *bigha* of land. The law is in favour of the tenants, but this is of no avail against the irresistible power of the zamindar. Such disputes cannot fail to prove injurious to the zamindar and utterly ruinous to the tenants. The writer therefore requests Mr. Luson, who has already given unmistakable proofs of his love for the people, to put an end to these disputes by interposing his good offices.

18. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 23rd January writes as follows:—

The land-revenue policy of the Government of India. The Government of India has in a recent Resolution on its land-revenue policy, said that "it is not in the permanent settlement of Bengal that the raiyat has found his salvation; it has been in the laws which have been passed by the Supreme Government to check its license and moderate its abuses." If the permanent settlement with the Bengal zamindar has been productive of evil rather than good, why does not Government make a permanent settlement with the raiyat in other parts of India? Such a permanent settlement may do immense good to the raiyat. In the above Resolution Government has omitted to consider this part of the question of the advisability of extending the permanent settlement to other parts of India.

MEDINI BANDHAV,
Jan. 22nd, 1902.

SANJIVANI
Jan. 23rd, 1902.

(g) — Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.

19. The *Tripura Hitaishi* [Tippera] of the 21st January gives a vivid

Bad roads in the Tippera district.

TRIPURA HITAISHI,
Jan. 21st, 1902.

description of the hardship and inconveniences which are suffered by the people of the Chandpur subdivision of the Tippera district on account of the extremely bad condition of their roads. There is a road in the Singhergao pargana which ends in the village Sakdi Rampur on the river Dukatia. If this road is pushed a mile further and joined with the Sahatali station on the Assam-Bengal Railway, immense good may be done to the inhabitants of the south-western part of the Tippera district.

20. The *Banga Bandhu* [Chandernagore] of the 25th January says that

Misbehaviour of Railway coolies on the overbridge at Seoraphuli.

BANGA BANDHU,
Jan. 25th, 1902.

Railway coolies are often found to misbehave themselves when ladies cross the overbridge at the Seoraphuli Railway station which is used by Railway passengers and the public as well. The Railway authorities should look to it.

(h) — General.

21. Referring to the Ross case the *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Fazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 22nd January writes as

Mr. Ross's misappropriation.

follows:—

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
Jan. 22nd, 1902.

In the opinion of our Government all whitemen possess an unimpeachable character, immense capacity for work, and perfect freedom from error. If it is said that there is no ground for thinking thus, Government gravely replies:

"Grounds? Government is not bound to show grounds." But grounds are not the private property of any Government; they come of themselves.

Mr. Ross, the late Commissioner of the Sunderbans, used to receive a salary of more than five hundred rupees, and travelling allowance at the rate Rs. 3 per diem. It was this Mr. Ross who was the other day charged with the criminal misappropriation of fifty thousand rupees belonging to Government, and sentenced to undergo eighteen months' rigorous imprisonment. Counsel for the defence said that Mr. Ross's accounts were not audited for nearly ten years—the whole period of his service as Commissioner of the Sunderbans. This proves the serious disorder which characterises the administration of the country. Counsel for the defence also said that it was Mr. Ross himself who first informed the Government of his having misappropriated the money.

Let us see what Government does to realise this large sum of money. We believe that not a *cawri* of Government money can be lost. It will therefore be a discredit to the Government if it fails to realise the money misappropriated by Mr. Ross. Every year in the hot season thousands of people suffer from severe scarcity of water. Government cannot spend a single pice to remove the scarcity, but it allows fifty thousand of its money to be misappropriated.

Mr. Ross is an Englishman, and not a god, and therefore not infallible. His case only shows the internally rotten condition of the Government of the country.

What security did the Government take from Mr. Ross that although many lakhs of rupees passed through his hands his accounts were not audited for nearly ten years? The conduct of the Government is inexplicable in this respect. Bad people say that Government does not care to take security from whitemen, because if money is stolen it is enjoyed by whitemen.

SANJIVANI,
Jan. 23rd, 1902.

22. Referring to the Ross case, the *Sanjivani* [Calcutta], of the 23rd January, asks whether the misappropriated sum of Rs. 50,000 should not be realised from those whose fault made it possible for Mr. Ross to misappropriate it during a long course of time.

HITAVADI,
Jan 24th, 1902.

Reduced boat-hire for a post office in the Tippera district.

23. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta], of the 24th January, says that the postman attached to the Vidyakut Post Office in the Tippera district, formerly used to receive boat-hire for six months in the year at the rate of Rs 6 per mensem.

But for some years past he has been receiving boat-hire for four months only in the year at the rate of only Rs. 2 per month. This causes great hardship to the poor man, who has to pay the greater part of the boat-hire from his own pocket. In the Civil and Criminal Courts of the district, boats are hired at the rate of even Rs. 13 or 14 per month. In Bengal postmen are noted for their mildness and patience in suffering hardships. It is out of question for them to raise a hue-and-cry over the reduction of their boat-hire. But it is hoped that the Postmaster-General of Bengal will take this case into his favourable consideration.

HITAVADI.

A seat for a native member on the Bengal Mining Board.

24. The same paper says that it is highly desirable that a respectable native should sit on the Mining Board which the Bengal Government is going to constitute under the Mining Act. More than half of the coal mines in Bengal are in the hands of native zamindars. The Raja of Jharia and more than one hundred mine owners have petitioned the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal to choose Kumar Dakshineswar Malia as a Member of the Board. The choice of the Bengal Landholders' Association has also fallen on the Kumar. It is curious that His Honour has sought the opinion of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce in this matter. The Chamber is unfit to give an opinion on the subject, because none of its members owns a coal-mine. Kumar Dakshineswar Malia has had a long experience of the mining business, and it is hoped that His Honour will not hesitate to give him a seat on the Board.

HITAVADI.

The Government Central Press.

An arrangement has come into force in the Government Central Press, from the beginning of the new year, under which 23 compositors, one reader and a set of pressmen are required to remain every night in the press-buildings in readiness for any urgent work that may arrive. If any such work come, they are to work at

night, and receive remuneration for it. If no such work come, they must pass the night in the press all the same, and return home in the morning thankful for the night's lodging. Did anybody ever hear of an arrangement so strange?

This arrangement would certainly never have been brought into force if the press authorities had any experience of the comforts of a night's lodging in the press with a shake down which consists of no more or no less than two coolies' blankets, and which dispenses even with a head-pillow, to say nothing of such a luxury as side-pillows. This strange arrangement is being enforced on pain of stoppage of promotion and extra remuneration, and even of dismissal. Is there no remedy for this?

The writer would also like to know what report has been made by the Press Committee in regard to certain curiosities of press accounts to which he drew the attention of Government in July last. (See Report on Native Papers for the 13th July 1901, paragraph 39.) He would like to know how Mr. Ross found it possible to do without a single section-holder—a class of officers indispensable in a press like the Government Central Press—in 1892-93, or how he could manage so economically under that head in other years. It is hoped that the motto of Government in this connection will be "reform of abuse" and not "suppression of truth."

26. The *Pratibasi* [Calcutta], of the 27th January, has the following in English :—

An appeal to Lord Curzon.

"The people have much confidence in Lord Curzon. His strong individuality, his catholic principles and his freedom from prejudice mark him out as the man to whom an appeal cannot be made but with some hope of success. His Excellency has chalked out a new path for himself and it will not be too much to expect that he will not fail to appreciate a man whose only fault has been that he has broken away from official tradition and from the policy of predecessors.

Mr. H. J. S. Cotton is on the eve of retirement. Himself the descendant of Civilians, he entered the service as a Bengal Civilian so far back as 1867. He was entrusted with various responsible posts and was never found wanting. He has to go away without being able to get to the top of the ladder. Has any one a better claim? He has grown grey in a service, where he had ample opportunities to study the difficult problem of Bengal administration in all its various aspects. The greatest of his detractors would not question his abilities. Such experience and abilities should not be thrown away. He has not only given emphatic expression to his sympathy for the people, but has grappled them to his soul with hooks of steel. Should it then be understood that the people of the soil are to be denied the pleasure of seeing a progressive administrator at the helm of affairs? An enlightened Government is not a bureaucracy with interests adverse to those of the people. The Government of India is a despotism, but it is a benevolent despotism. It should not, therefore, by its conduct on the present occasion, give a fresh illustration of the truism that, to be on the side of the weak, is the very hardest thing in life, specially in official life. Mr. Cotton was no doubt put on his mettle when fighting for the coolies, and this has led the Anglo-Indians to raise the false alarm that he would not hold the balance even as an administrator of the province. We can understand the attitude of his countrymen, but why should he on that ground be deprived of the preferment is more than we can see. Our Viceroy has himself testified to his integrity of purpose on more occasions than one, and it is therefore to be expected that he will not allow himself to be carried away by the opinion of a class of men.

"Unfortunately events are transpiring that will confirm the people in the belief that to love the people and fight for them is to forfeit the confidence of the powers that be.

"Mr. Denzil Ibbetson seems to be the man in the running for the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal. He too is a very able man. But he is a Punjab Civilian, and what is more he can afford to wait, as he has still four years to serve out his term. Mr. Cotton had not the good fortune of being appointed a Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. One should like to see the Government making amends to him for this piece of injustice done to him by granting him an extension for a year, and thus affording him a chance of succeeding to the Satrapy of Bengal.

PRATIBASI.
Jan. 27th, 1902.

"Mr. Cotton, we think, may not be anxious for such a reward, he being one of the privileged individuals who know how to eat and sleep without any regard to glory. We throw out this suggestion in the hope that Lord-Curzon, a shrewd and able statesman as he is, will see that the neglect with which Mr. Cotton has been treated cannot fail to point a moral and adorn a tale."

III.—LEGISLATION.

SANJIVANI,
Jan. 23rd, 1902.

27. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta], of the 23rd January, says that a Bill is passing through the Punjab Legislative Council to legalise the impressment of cattle in times of war, and their forced hire at all times. The Bill

The Punjab Bill for impressing cattle.
will be passed within six weeks after its introduction. The Hon'ble Sir Harnam Singh has protested against such a hurried enactment of the Bill on the ground that people will not be able to give their opinions on it within such a short space of time.

Government is expending twenty or twenty-five crores of rupees every year for military purposes, and can it not yet do without impressing the people's cattle? *Zubberdust* is *zubberdust*, backed by the legislature or not. If Government tyrannises over the people, why will not the zamindar do the same? In the same way the village headman, the *badmush*, the strong man,—all will justify their evil doings by pleading the example of the Government. Government is too liberal in military matters. Let it therefore keep lakhs of cattle for military purposes, and not make laws to oppress the people. Let there be peace in the country and no *zubberdust*.

IV.—NATIVE STATES.

HINDI BANGAVASI,
Jan. 27th, 1902

28. The *Hindi Bangavasi* [Calcutta], of the 27th January has the following:

The Berar question.

For a long time the question of making over the Berars to the Government of the Nizam has formed the subject of a discussion between the Government of India and that of the Nizam. But the question still remains unsettled. It seems that the Government of India has no intention of making over that tract to the Nizam. Sir Richard Mead, in whose time the Berars were ceded to the English, said that the Government of India should be careful enough to keep the Berars in its possession for ever. In the full hope of regaining the ceded tract, the Nizam's Government asked Lord Curzon to reconsider the Berar question. Under the direction of Lord Curzon, a Commission was appointed to settle the dispute. It seems that the recommendation of the Commission is not favourable to the Nizam. Government is not likely to part with the Berars, which are one of the most fertile tracts in India, and it is not therefore going to curtail some of the unnecessary expenditure charged upon that tract. The *Pioneer's* suggestion in this connection seems to be a good piece of advice. It says that if the Government has no intention of making over the whole of the Berars to the Nizam, it ought to restore one-half of it to him, and keep the other half in satisfaction of the debt which the Hyderabad Government owes to the Government of India.

V.—PROSPECTS OF THE CROPS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

MEDINI BANDHAV,
Jan. 28th, 1902.

29. The Contai correspondent of the *Medini Bandhav* [Midnapore], of the 25th January, sends to that paper the following item of news:—Krishna Shamal and Hara Shamal,

Deaths from starvation in the Midnapore district.
brothers, lived in village Uttar Kachua in Ramnagar thana. Since the flood of 1307 (B.S.) they were reduced to straitened circumstances. The two brothers worked as hard as they could; yet they and their three dependents got no full meal. In Agrahayana last they left their village in search of more lucrative employment. Their aged mother and Krishnas' wife and infant child lived in a wretched hut. The mother was reduced to a skeleton from want of food, and died in Paus last. A few days after, Krishna's wife died from the same cause. The infant child is now absolutely helpless! We humbly request the sympathetic Magistrate of the district to

inquire and ascertain if this heart-rending report is true, and, if true, to provide against such sad occurrences in future.

30. In noticing the Government Resolution on the subject of land revenue assessments in India, the *Bangavasi* [Calcutta], of the 25th January, writes as follows:—

Connection of famine with land revenue assessments.

Lord Curzon is an exceedingly clever writer and speaker. His long resolution reviewing the statements made by Mr. R. C. Dutt and certain other critics of Government on the subject of land revenue assessments in different parts of India does not contain even one irrelevant or unnecessary observation, and is a careful examination and analysis of the adverse criticism to which the Government's land revenue policy has been of late subjected. It seems to us that in many passages of this resolution Government has been successful in its attempt to show that its critics are in error and labouring under a misconception.

BANGAVASI,
Jan. 25th, 1902.

That drought, as observed by Government, causes a failure of crops, and thereby leads to famine is perfectly true. But it should also be borne in mind that even now the crops produced in the country in a good year are large enough to prevent a possibility of famine occurring in the three or four succeeding years, in case those years prove unfavourable. At the present time famines, as also drought and excessive rainfall, have become frequent. Food-grains are exported to foreign countries, and there are no arrangements for keeping stores of grain in the country. A state of things in which production is checked, owing to the risks of season and savings have not been effected from the outturn of previous crops, cannot but lead to famine and distress. Over and above this, the people have grown luxurious, and purchase foreign made articles of luxury in exchange for their food-grains. Thus having parted with their food as well as with their money, they have become paupers, and suffer greatly during a famine.

As regards the question of land revenue assessments, Government says that these assessments have nothing to do with the occurrence of famine in the country. Now, whatever the views respectively held by Government and its critics in this controversy, these barren discussions and bandying of words will never prevent famine which is brought about by dire misfortune, and relief of which brings glory to him who undertakes it.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

31. The *Bangavasi* [Calcutta], of the 25th January, says:—

The Pioneer and the Congress. The *Pioneer* has unjustly ridiculed the Congress. Referring to the "Volunteers" incident, it says:—"At the recent Congress meeting in Calcutta the usual resolution was passed denouncing the police as the embodiment of tyranny and corruption. 'The police officer,' said one orator, Babu Shish Chunder Sarbadhikari, 'wields powers and authorities hardly distinguishable from a mandate emanating from the Czar of Russia,' which 'powers and authorities' are generally used 'to advance self-interest in utter disregard of public duty at a considerable sacrifice of public interest.' And yet, as we learn from a hitherto unpublished page of Congress story, it was only the assistance of the unspeakable police that saved from imminent peril something even more dear to the Congress Babu than the public interest, to wit, the Babu's skin. It seems that one of the methods employed by the Congress authorities to raise funds was to enrol students and school boys as 'Volunteer' attendants on payment of a fee of Re. 1 a head. (It was originally intended to charge Rs. 5, but this was afterwards reduced to Re. 1). They were given red scarves as badges of office and carried flags; much to the scandal of the orthodox Hindus, whose protests on this point have been voiced by the *Bangavasi*. Twelve hundred volunteers in all are said to have been enrolled, much to the advantage of the Congress exchequer. But the Calcutta school-boys had the vaguest idea of discipline, they admitted their personal friends without payment, and persisted in occupying seats reserved for the delegates. These proceedings at length exasperated the elders, who notified to the 'volunteers' that they were to be disbanded. The boys hotly resented this interference with the liberty of the subject, and notified in their turn that if the threat of disbandment were carried out, they

BANGAVASI,
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would burn down the *pandal*. As the structure was composed of bamboos and matting with a thatched roof, the threat could easily have been carried out. The Congress leaders at once took alarm, and applied in most urgent terms to the police for protection. This was at once granted, a special guard of some 30 constables being sent as a reinforcement to the men already on duty. So the *pandal* was saved from destruction, and the various resolutions were carried, including the one specially denouncing the iniquities of the police. It would be desecration to look upon the Congress in the light of an entertainment; but on this occasion the school-boys must have had their rupee's worth."

The logic is fallacious, and the ridicule ought not to have found a place in a paper like the *Pioneer*. It is undoubtedly the function of the Police to protect; but it often times oppresses and terrorises. The *Pioneer* itself has said so on several occasions, and advocated Police reform. Every now and then newspapers publish narratives of police oppression. Viceroys, Governors and Lieutenant-Governors have left on record instances of police oppression and recommended police reform. Lord Curzon is just now busy formulating measures of police reform. Is, then, the Congress to be ridiculed for having alluded to police tyranny and asked for necessary reform?

URIYA PAPERS.

URIYA AND
NAVASAMVAD,
Jan. 15th, 1902.

32. The *Uriya and Navasamvad* [Balasore], of the 15th January, states that the health of the Balasore town is good. The *Utkaldipika* [Cuttack], of the 18th January, states that the health of the Puri town is equally good.

UTKALDIPKA,
Jan. 18th, 1902.

33. All the native papers of Orissa speak highly of the "Sun-heat" machine of Srikrishna Joshi, which was exhibited in the late Industrial Exhibition held at Calcutta, and suggest that the apparatus may be introduced into all cook-rooms, thereby effecting considerable savings under the heads of "Coal" and "Wood" in every public and private budget. It is said that food cooked in the sun's heat tastes better than that cooked in fire. It is further hinted that the principle of the "Sun-heat" machine may be applied to much higher objects, securing better locomotion at a comparatively less cost to the public.

URIYA AND
NAVASAMVAD,
Jan. 15th, 1902.

34. The *Uriya and Navasamvad* [Balasore], of the 15th January, takes pains to show in detail that the questions on Uriya literature set in the last middle vernacular scholarship examination were most unsuitable, and faulty in many other respects, and observes that the educational authorities should take particular care to select examiners in future.

URIYA AND
NAVASAMVAD,

The late District Magistrate of
Balasore.

SAMBALPUR
HITAISHINI,
Jan. 15th, 1902.

35. The same paper regrets the transfer of Mr. Dixon, who, as Magistrate-Collector of the Balasore district, had made himself noted for impartiality and a strong sense of duty in a short period.

36. The *Sambalpur Hitaishini* [Bamra], of the 15th January, writes a long leader on the amalgamation of Sambalpur with Orissa proper, pointing out that the Sambalpur district was once a part and parcel of the Orissa Division, and that the people of both the Provinces speak not only one language, to wit, Uriya, but have many customs and traditions in common, and observes that the Uriyas of Sambalpur and Ganjam should make a strong and common effort to secure a united Orissa, as that is very necessary in the interests of national development.

UTKALDIPKA,
Jan. 18th, 1902.

37. The *Utkaldipika* [Cuttack], of the 18th January, mourns the death of Babu Balaram Mullick, a late Sub-Judge of Cuttack, who had retired from the service, but who did not live long enough to enjoy his pension. While Sub-Judge of Cuttack, he had started a fund with the object of repairing the temple of Jagannath, and it was to his diligence, labour and earnestness that the fund increased day by day, and at last succeeded in repairing a portion of the Temple. His memory is cherished with deep affection by all worshippers of Jagannath, and especially by his friends and acquaintances in Orissa.

38. Referring to the order of the British Military Department under-taking to purchase one lakh of Indian boots every year for the use of British and Colonial troops in South Africa for a period of three years, the same paper congratulates the boot-makers on their well-merited success, and adds that the Indians should do their best to secure similar patronage in every other branch of Indian industry.

UTKALDIPKA,
Jan. 19th, 1902.

39. Referring to the prohibitory order of the Cuttack Municipality, interdicting washing of clothes, bathing of domestic animals and some other acts in the river Kathjuri within certain municipal limits, the same paper points out that though such orders are passed every year, they are obeyed for a short time at first and are then more honoured in the breach than in the observance. The writer states that some of the orders are very hard, and that it would be more practicable to assign fixed hours (morning to midday) for bathing and fixed hours (midday to evening) for washing of clothes by washermen, bathing of animals and other similar acts. No one will feel aggrieved by such an arrangement.

A prohibitory order passed by the Cuttack Municipality.

40. Referring to the letter of its Puri correspondent, the same paper points out that the building regulations of the Puri Municipality should be made elastic, so as to suit the requirements and qualifications of the rate-payers, and must not be stiff and stereotyped in any way. As an illustration of his view, the writer states that the Municipal Commissioners should rest satisfied with whatever maps or plans the rate-payers submit to them, and must not demand maps or plans, drawn up by professional men; for most of the rate-payers know not how to read and write, and are too poor to pay professional engineers or overseers.

UTKALDIPKA.

Want of an embankment in the Puri district.

41. The Kothdesh correspondent of the same paper points out that the absence of an embankment on the eastern side of the Kushabhadra river in the Puri district for a few miles has been the cause of distress to many men and women residing in that part of the district; for they and their belongings, including the growing crops, run the risk of being washed away by riverfloods every year. The correspondent exhorts the local authorities to do something in the matter.

UTKALDIPKA.

Mr. Wacha on higher education.

42. Referring to the speech of Mr. Wacha on Indian arts as the President of the Indian National Congress, the same paper observes that the President elect was very right in calling attention to the fact that no real progress can be made in the arts without a sound system of high education, and that it is for the Indian public to provide such education.

UTKALDIPKA.

The last Social Conference.

43. Referring to the deliberations of the Social Conference in connection with the last Congress meeting, the same paper states that they were all speeches, pleasant to hear and discuss, but no good could result therefrom so long as the theories were not put to practice.

UTKALDIPKA.

ASSAM PAPERS.

44. The *Paridarsak* [Sylhet], of the 20th January, has the following in English :—

The Subordinate Educational Service.

PARIDARSAK,
Jan. 20th, 1902.

" Some years ago, we advocated in these columns the cause of the Assam Subordinate Educational Service, and submitted a scheme for its reorganisation for the favourable consideration of the Government. But we do not know if the Government seriously took the matter into its consideration. At any rate, nothing has hitherto been done to improve the position and prospects of this most important branch of the public service. We are, therefore, very glad to find that the *Weekly Chronicle* of the 31st December has published an able article pressing upon the consideration of the Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner the need of improving this much neglected service. Now that the time is not very far when the Hon'ble Mr. Cotton will leave Assam, we fervently hope that before His Honour lays down the reins of the Government, he will see his

way to thoroughly reconstitute the service in such a manner as to make it sufficiently attractive for our distinguished graduates.

"Assuming the financial difficulty of attractively reconstituting the service, our contemporary suggests as an alternative proposal, the occasional promotion of its deserving members to the Provincial Executive Service. This is no doubt a very wise suggestion which we join with our esteemed contemporary in earnestly urging upon his Honour's consideration. We cannot, however, think that the *Chronicle* is correctly informed when it says that five new appointments will soon be made to the Provincial Executive Service in the place of five vacancies likely to occur before Mr. Cotton leaves the Province. Referring to the Assam Civil List, we find that the permanent vacancies that have been caused by the retirement of Rai S. C. Banerji Bahadur and the transfer of Mr. M. N. Ghosh to Bengal, were already filled up by officiating appointments which will, as a matter of course, be now confirmed. Babu Giris Chandra Das, Settlement Officer, will, we understand, revert to district work on the first April next. There will thus be only two new appointments made, as far as we can see. So we are not quite sure if it can be reasonably expected that one of these appointments will be conferred on a deserving member of the Subordinate Educational Service. We would, therefore, press for the thorough reconstitution of the Service, which is urgently called for in the interests of education. We cannot persuade ourselves to believe that the Administration cannot afford to spend about two thousand rupees a year, more than what it now does, to strengthen the Subordinate Educational Service; for that will be the increase of annual expenditure which the adoption of the scheme that we had taken the liberty to propose some years ago will entail.

"By the establishment of the Gauhati College, Mr. Cotton has laid the people of the Brahmaputra Valley only under deep and lasting obligation to him. He has yet done nothing in educational matters whereby his name may be enshrined in the grateful memory of the people of the Surma Valley long after he has ceased to be its ruler. The recent institution of two reserved junior scholarships for the Manipuris and the people of the Jaintia pargana, for which we are indeed grateful to him, will benefit two backward sections of the community only, and, moreover, the occasion for the award of such scholarships will not arise every year. The reconstitution and improvement of the Subordinate Educational Service will benefit the whole Province, the Surma Valley as well as the Brahmaputra Valley. We beg humbly therefore to submit that there is yet time for our beloved ruler to take up the consideration of this question in right earnest, and our earnest prayer to him is that before his impartial, sympathetic and enlightened administration of Assam comes to a termination, he will arrive at a satisfactory solution of this question, and constitute and improve the Educational Service.

We shall, in a future issue, discuss the scheme which our esteemed contemporary of the *Weekly Chronicle* has promised to suggest for his Honour's consideration.

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,

Bengali Translator.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,
The 1st February, 1902.